

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1651
ANSWERED ON:07.03.2001
USE OF ANIMALS IN EXPERIMENTATION
PRABHUNATH SINGH

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether institutes manufacturing Anti-Snake Venom Serum (ASVS) are flouting basic ethics in animal experimentation and number of horses are being brutally killed by them for the manufacture of ASVS for the last two years;
- (b) if so, the details of guidelines/rules fixed by WHO for the manufacture of ASVS;
- (c) the details of action taken against institutions for not following the guidelines/rules fixed by WHO for the manufacture of ASVS;
- (d) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned 'Hafkine bled 84 horses to death' for serum' appearing in the Indian Express dated December 14, 2000; and
- (e) if so, action taken to check brutality on animals?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SMT. MANEKA GANDHI)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The WHO guidelines for the production of ASVS state that only healthy equines in the age group of 5-8 years can be used. Healthy horses should have a haemoglobin content of 14-18% and horses (average weight of 450-500 kg) can be bled 5-8 litres every month when the Packed Cell volume is 35-40%. Sterile conditions are mandatory for both blood collection and storage.

(c) The CPCSEA has been viewing both the non adherence of a production of ASVS seriously. The institutes have been instructed to rigidly comply to all legal and scientific norms. Old, blind, sick and lame animals have been asked to be given veterinary assistance and possibly rehabilitated in coordination with the CPCSEA. The status of animal houses have been asked to be improved for better hygiene and animals to be given better nutrition.

In the case of King Institute of Preventive Medicine, Chennai the State Govt has suspended the ASVS production at KIPM since November, 2000. Govt. of Maharashtra, has also sanctioned Rs.58 lakhs to renovate the stables at HBPCCL, Pune.

CPCSEA sub-committees are examining the application of registration of these two institutes. Other institutes are also being examined by CPCSEA.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The Government has initiated necessary action. The CPCSEA has been playing a constructive role in not only providing these institutes with the necessary scientific information including the introduction of plasmapheresis in the production of ASVS, it has also helped in the veterinary care of these animals by providing both veterinary personnel and medicines and also in the rehabilitation of the old and dying horses.